

What is claimed is:

1. An agent-neutral computerized method for processing administrative data of a medical service provider, comprising the steps of:

defining standard administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system, a coordinator system, and a plurality of practice management agent systems, in creating and processing administrative data;

creating neutral evaluation data for said agent-neutral coordinator system by tracking administrative data transferred between said medical service provider system and said practice management agent systems, wherein said administrative data is in said standard administrative data formats;

providing said neutral evaluation data to said medical service provider system for selection of a first practice management agent system from said plurality of practice management agent systems; and

wherein said agent-neutral coordinator system reduces financial and operating costs for switching from said first practice management agent system to a second practice management system.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said medical service provider system for generating said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said practice management agent systems for processing said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of registering with said coordinator system said selection of said practice management agent system by said medical service provider system.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
evaluating security data provided to said coordinator system by said  
practice management agent system for accessing said administrative data of said  
medical service provider; and

5 authorizing said access to said administrative data for said practice  
management agent system by said coordinator system.

6. An agent-neutral computerized system for providing administrative  
services for a medical service provider, comprising:

means for defining administrative data formats for use by a medical service  
provider system and practice management agent systems in creating and

5 processing administrative data;

means for creating agent-neutral evaluation data in said coordinator system  
by tracking administrative data transactions transferred between said medical  
service provider system and said practice management agent systems;

10 means for obtaining additional agent-neutral evaluation data for utilization  
by said medical service provider; and

means for providing said agent-neutral evaluation data to said medical  
service provider for selection of a practice management agent system from a  
plurality of practice management agent systems

7. An agent-neutral system for providing administrative services for a medical  
service provider, comprising:

an agent-neutral coordinator system for standardizing administrative data  
formats for processing administrative data of a medical service provider system by  
5 a first practice management agent system, said coordinator system providing data  
access authorization and security for said administrative data of said medical  
service provider system to said first practice management agent system, and for  
providing evaluation data from said first practice management agent system for  
evaluation by said medical service provider system; and

10 wherein said standardized administrative data format substantially  
eliminates costs incurred by said medical service provider system for switching  
from said first practice management agent system to a second practice  
management agent system.

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8. The system in claim 7 wherein administrative services provided by said practice management agency system to said medical service provider system includes a billing process, a reimbursement process, a credentialing process, a pre-authorization process, and a collection process.

9. The system in claim 7 wherein said administrative data provided by said medical service provider system to said practice management agency system includes billing data, reimbursement data, credentialing data, pre-authorization data, and collection data.

10. The system in claim 7, wherein said standard data format includes coordinator-set operational standards and computer system interface standards.

11. The system in claim 7, wherein said evaluation of said first practice management agent system's effectiveness includes evaluation of price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, and customer service relating to said first practice management agent system.

12. A method for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising the steps of:

standardizing operational procedures and system communication between a medical service provider and a plurality of practice management agents which provide administrative services to said medical service provider;

creating a predetermined data format for standardizing administrative data relating to billing and reimbursement of a medical service provider;

providing a medical service provider system capable of generating said administrative data of said medical service provider in said predetermined format;

providing a coordinator system for defining said predetermined format for transmission of said administrative data between said medical service provider system and a first practice management agent system;

protecting communication of said administrative data between said medical service provider system and said first practice management agent system by providing data access authorization and security to said administrative data by said coordinator system;

generating an analysis of said practice management's agents' effectiveness from coordinator system administrative data to aid said medical service provider in evaluating and selecting said practice management agent system;

obtaining said predetermined format administrative data from said coordinator system for providing administrative services from said first practice management agent to said medical service provider; and

substantially eliminating costs incurred by said medical service provider system for switching from said first practice management agent system to said second practice management agent by use of said predetermined format administrative data by said plurality of said practice management agent systems.

13. The method for providing administrative services for a medical service provider of claim 12, wherein said medical service provider system costs which are substantially eliminated include:

costs for changing computer systems for administrative data entry and data transmission;

costs for reformatting administrative data which was entered in a format for a first practice management agent system prior to switching to a second practice management agent system;

costs for retraining personnel to conform with administrative procedures and computer operating methods of said second practice management agent system; and

costs of performing business wherein said agent-neutral coordinator system acts as a mediator to resolve minor issues and disputes between the medical service provider system and the practice management agent systems.

14. An Internet-based system for selecting a practice management agent system for providing administrative services to a medical service provider system, comprising:

a server computer hosting a practice management agent selection service accessible via client computers to a medical service provider;

wherein the server computer provides a user interface comprising input controls whereby said medical service provider system selects criteria and a display whereby results are displayed, the input controls including a set of menu items including entering practice management search criteria, submitting search criteria to a coordinator system, analyze and display neutral evaluation data, and select practice management agent system; and

whereby said selection service is available via the Internet to assist a medical service provider system in selecting a practice management agent system.

15. A computer-readable storage medium containing computer executable code for instructing a computer to operate as follows:

defining standard administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system, a coordinator system, and practice management agent systems, in

5 creating and processing administrative data;

creating neutral evaluation data for said coordinator system by tracking administrative data transferred between said medical service provider system and said practice management agent systems, wherein said administrative data is in said standard administrative data formats; and

10 providing said neutral evaluation data to said medical service provider system for selection of a practice management agent system from said practice management agent systems.